

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5 and 7-29 are pending. Claims 2-4 and 6 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 27-29 have been added to define embodiments of the invention that are disclosed in the application at page 36, line 5 to page 37, line 26, for example. Similarly, claims 1 and 17 have been amended to indicate features of the resin coating in claim 1 and the film of claim 17 that are fully disclosed in the application at page 6, line 28 to page 7, line 5 and page 36, line 5 to page 37, line 26, for example. Accordingly, no new matter has been introduced by these amendments.

Applicants acknowledge and appreciate the detailed Office action containing a clear application of the prior art to each pending claim, and the helpful suggestion to avoid the § 112 issue.

Rejection: § 112, 2d paragraph

Claims 1-3, 7-16, and 19-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, 2d paragraph as being indefinite because of the parenthesis in line 5 of claim 1 around "structures (1)." In accordance with the suggestion from the examiner, these parenthesis have been deleted. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection: § 102(b) - Ishimura et al.

Claims 1, 7-16, 19, 20 and 22-26 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ishimura et al. (EP 0304503). Applicants do not agree that even the claims as rejected were anticipated by Ishimura et al. because it is not clear that the epoxy resin shell comprises a structure in which two structures (1) are mutually bonded via one urea bond as specified in claim 1. Nevertheless, although Ishimura et al. (page 6, lines 7-20) does suggest the use of an isocyanate compound having at least two isocyanate groups in the molecule, including an exemplary triisocyanate, as pointed out

by the examiner, Ishimura et al. does not teach or suggest an additional, or other isocyanate compound other than the recited low molecular weight polyisocyanate compound as now specified in the pending claims. As noted at page 37, lines 7-17 of the specification, the addition of the two isocyanate compounds is effective to improve the dispersibility of the latent curing agent according to the present invention. As Ishimura et al. fails to anticipate these claims, and fails to teach or suggest or provide any reason to add another isocyanate compound when making the resin shell, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection: § 102(b) - Hosokawa et al.

Claims 4, 6 and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hosokawa et al. (JP2000-230032). Hosokawa et al. describes a shell for a core of hardening accelerators wherein the shell consists of a polyurea that is made from two specific triisocyanate compounds specified as compounds (1) and (2). As the examiner noted, Hosokawa et al. also teaches that this combination of triisocyanates is reacted with water. Claims 4 and 6 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claim 18 has been amended to depend on claim 1.

Hosokawa et al. fails to anticipate claim 18 because it fails to teach a resin coating comprises a structure in which two structures (1) are mutually bonded via one urea bond, wherein the structures (1) are each obtained by bonding three nitrogen atoms at a branching point via a linear or cyclic aliphatic hydrocarbon group and wherein at least one of the nitrogen atoms of each of the structures (1) is incorporated in the urea bond as specified in claim 1. To constitute anticipation, each of the limitations of the claims must be found, either expressly or inherently, in a single prior art reference. MPEP 2131. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection: § 102(b) - Hosokawa et al. and Ishimura et al.

Claim 5 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hosokawa et al. taken with Ishimura et al. Claim 5 is considered to be distinguished from this combination for at least the same reasons advanced above in distinguishing these references over claim 1. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection: § 102(b) - Hosokawa et al.

Claim 17 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hosokawa et al. Claim 17 is directed to a method of manufacturing a latent curing agent for an epoxy resin that comprises coating a film that is made by reacting two isocyanates with an active hydrogen compound. The recited film has essentially the same characteristics as the resin coating of claim 1 that is not taught by Hosokawa et al., namely, it comprises a structure in which two structures (1) are mutually bonded via one urea bond, wherein the structures (1) are each obtained by bonding three nitrogen atoms at a branching point via a linear or cyclic aliphatic hydrocarbon group and wherein at least one of the nitrogen atoms of each of the structures (1) is incorporated in the urea bond as specified in claim 17. Since Hosokawa et al. does not describe each of the limitations of claim 17, it is not anticipated by Hosokawa et al. Accordingly, this rejection should be withdrawn.

Rejection: § 103 - Ishimura et al.

Claims 2 and 3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being unpatentable over Ishimura et al. As these claims have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, this rejection is moot.

Prompt and favorable reconsideration is requested.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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